

Employees of the Month



Pat Billington

Hometown: Raised in Michigan; Kaneohe is home now.

Family: Husband Taka, and daughters Memorina (27) and Laura (13)

Position with Corps and how long: General attorney in HED for 15 years.

Describe your job in 50 words or less: I provide legal counsel and support to the District Engineer and staff on environmental planning and remediation issues, authorized civil works projects, support for other federal, state and local agencies, litigation support, contracting issues, and real estate matters.

What do you like best about your job? I like working with people to solve problems and move projects forward. I also like to read and to learn new legal and technical areas.

What is the most difficult part of your job? Not always having enough time to work with other District staff on their issues.

If I was the DE for a day, I would... walk around the District, visit each office and talk with the District staff, listen for concerns and suggestions that might be sound and implementable.

What is the best improvement in the District in the past six months? Everyone's workspace is being upgraded, especially with new furniture.

What is the best improvement in your office in the past six months? In early August our newest attorney, Richard Say, joined our office. He is an experienced Corps attorney and has helped tackle Office of Counsel's workload since he arrived. He's a great addition to our office.



Harold Nakaoka

Hometown: Honolulu, Hawaii

Family: Wife Grace, and two children, Jayson (9) and Kristen (5)

Position with Corps and how long: Project Manager for Civil/Public Works Branch, Programs and Project Management. Twenty-five years of federal service, 20 with the Corps.

Describe your job in 50 words or less: I make sure my customers get what they want, when they want it, and are satisfied with it.

What do you like best about your job? On a career basis - being able to work on a wide variety of projects and programs.

What is the most difficult part of your job? Dealing with the major organizational changes whenever they occur.

If I was the DE for a day, I would... I can't think of anything significant, but I would like to do something fun, like give everyone 59 minutes off!

What is the best improvement in the District in the past six months? New furniture!

What is the best improvement in your office in the past six months? New furniture!

We're all Americans now. It doesn't matter where we were born, or what language we speak to say our prayers. —Margaret Wente in Canada's The Globe and Mail

Employees of the Month



Maria Buckner

Hometown: Waianae, HI

Family: Husband George, daughter Shantel (9), sons DeForest (7) and Kenya (5)

Position with Corps and how long: Contract Specialist since April 1999. With Corps since July 1996.

Describe your job in 50 words or less: I procure supplies, services (large and small) and issue construction type contracts. I'm the training coordinator for the contracting office. I'm also the International Merchant's Purchase Card (IMPAC) Agency program coordinator for the District and Division.

What do you like best about your job? I enjoy the contracting field as a whole because there's always something new to learn. It's exciting, not monotonous. I especially enjoy satisfying our customers, both internal and external.

What is the most difficult part of your job? I guess it would be working long hours during year-end. The long hours at work and not being at home is stressful for my family and me. I'm just thankful that it's only a small part of the year and not year 'round.

If I was the District Engineer for a day, I would... Is this a trick question?

What is the best improvement in the District in the past six months? Most offices received new furniture, which provides a much more professional look.

What is the best improvement in your office in the past six months? We had a successful year-end. All FY01 requirements were awarded before Oct. 1, 2001. And our contract register book is now automated, thanks to our summer hire, Gary Li.



Katie S. P. Lock Tamashiro

Hometown: Honolulu, Hawaii

Family: Daughter Jill, son John, companion Reuben, and cat Dimie

Position with Corps and how long? Emergency Operations Coordinator, 4 years; 23 1/2 years with POD.

Describe your job in 50 words or less: I am responsible for Catastrophic Disaster Response Planning (CDRP) in the Pacific (Alaska and Hawaii), National Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP) involving planning for military contingencies and exercises in the U.S. Pacific Command, and other military programs such as Field Force Engineering (FFE) at HED.

What do you like best about your job? Working with a diverse group and a lot of nice people over the years.

What is the most difficult part of your job? Trying to maintain balance and also have a private life. I have spent way too much time at work in my 23 1/2 years with the Corps.

If I was the DE for a day, I would... try to resolve problems that affect the overall district organization by analyzing situations from all sides, placing myself in the other person's shoes, and taking a truly subjective approach to the problems at hand.

What is the best improvement in the District in the past six months? I've noticed the boxes in the hallways in Bldg. 230 and know the various offices have been, or will be, physically transformed by the new modular furniture purchased for the District. It was a long time in coming and it looks great!

What is the best improvement in your office in the past six months? All four EM positions in the District EM Division have been fully staffed.

Some people live their whole lives, long lives, without having left anything behind. My sons will be told their whole lives that their father was a hero. —Lisa Beamer, wife of man who took action against hijackers